

Message Text

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ORIGIN NEA-07

INFO OCT-01 SS-14 ISO-00 NSC-05 NSCE-00 INR-05 /032 R

DRAFTED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER:PDW

APPROVED BY NEA/ARN:MDRAPER

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P 132158Z OCT 76

FM SECSTATE WASHDC

TO AMEMBASSY DAMASCUS PRIORITY

C O N F I D E N T I A L STATE 253745

LIMDIS

E.O. 11652: GDS

TAGS: PINT, CASC, US, SY

SUBJECT: RABBI GOLDRICH

REF: DAMASCUS 3994

1. RABBI STEPHEN GOLDRICH, CHAIRMAN OF COMMITTEE ON JEWS IN ARAB LANDS OF CENTRAL CONFERENCE OF AMERICAN RABBIS, INFORMED NEA/ARN THAT HE OR CENTRAL CONFERENCE WAS ON VERGE OF SENDING MESSAGE TO DEPARTMENT SEEKING USG ASSISTANCE FOR VISIT BY GOLDRICH AND TWO OTHERS TO SYRIA BEGINNING APPROXIMATELY OCTOBER 27. GOLDRICH SAID DELEGATION INTENDED TO SPEND APPROXIMATELY THREE WEEKS IN SYRIA AND DISTRIBUTE HANUKKAH GIFTS INDIVIDUALLY RPT INDIVIDUALLY TO EACH OF SOME 1,200 JEWISH FAMILIES IN SYRIA. PROGRAM WOULD BE BILLED AS A PERSONAL GESTURE FROM AMERICAN JEWRY TO SYRIAN JEWRY.

2. GOLDRICH ADMITTED HE HAD RECEIVED NO RPT NO RESPONSE FROM RABBI HAMRA OF DAMASCUS TO THIS PROPOSED PROGRAM OF GIFT-GIVING.

3. WE EXPRESSED SOME RESERVATIONS ABOUT THE PROPOSED
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PROGRAM, SAYING IT COULD APPEAR TO THE SYRIANS AS A PUBLIC

RELATIONS EXERCISE AND INTERFERE WITH OTHER EFFORTS UNDER-
WAY TO DEAL WITH CERTAIN ASPECTS OF THE ISSUE OF SYRIAN
JEWRY. WE SUGGESTED, HOWEVER, THAT HE SEND HIS MESSAGE
IN ANY EVENT; WE MIGHT MAKE SOME COUNTER
SUGGESTIONS UPON FURTHER CONSIDERATION- RABBI GOLDRICH
SAID HE WOULD BE AMENABLE.

4. EMBASSY'S SUGGESTIONS ON HANDLING THIS REQUEST FROM
RABBI GOLDRICH WOULD BE APPRECIATED. KISSINGER

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